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Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)
later: Ms. Ploder ..... (Austria)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 63: Report of the Human Rights Council (A/65/53 and Add.1, and Corr.1, and A/65/333)

1. **Mr. Phuangketkeow** (President of the Human Rights Council) said that, during its fourth cycle, the Council had made significant progress in the realms of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. Furthermore, the universal periodic review had thus far examined 127 Member States.

2. The Council had addressed traditional issues such as human rights, the right to food and the right to development, but also the impact of the global economic and financial crises on human rights, the protection of journalists in situations of armed conflict, and the adverse effects of toxic waste on human rights. In addition, it had been seized with human rights situations occurring in various parts of the world, including support for the post-earthquake recovery process in Haiti, the Israeli attack on the aid flotilla and the human rights situation in Somalia.

3. Two more special procedures mandates had been established: a special rapporteur on the rights of freedom of association and assembly and a working group on the elimination of discrimination against women in law and in practice. The Council had also set up a working group to draft the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training and a working group to consider the possibility of elaborating an international regulatory framework in relation to the activities of private military and security companies. It had also extended the mandate of the Working Group tasked with the elaboration of an Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in order to provide a communications procedure.

4. The addendum to the report included seven resolutions recommended for further actions by the General Assembly; three with specific requests and invitations addressed to the Assembly, while four established new mandates or activities giving rise to additional resource requirements. The Council had also recommended that the General Assembly should proclaim international days for the right to the truth concerning gross human rights violations and for the dignity of victims, and for victims of enforced disappearance.

5. During the fifth cycle the Council needed to maintain the pace and progress of its regular work while undergoing the review process in conjunction with the General Assembly. The process should be pragmatic and realistic; it would provide a unique opportunity to assess the way in which the Council functioned, and identify areas where its effectiveness could be enhanced. The focus would be on how to create more impact on the ground, how to better address both chronic and emergency human rights violations and how to make best use of time and available resources to fulfil its mandates.

6. The working relationship between the Council and the General Assembly was one of the aspects to be addressed during the review. The nature of the Council implied that mandates could be created at any time during the year while the General Assembly considered the Council's proposals only once a year. That system could delay the provision of resources for new mandates and activities; moreover, prompt support from the General Assembly was even more critical when the Council was dealing with urgent human rights issues.

7. **Mr. Burniat** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, Iceland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, Liechtenstein, Norway, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, recalled the general comments of the European Union in relation to the statement made by the President of the Human Rights Council regarding the dialogue between the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Human Rights Council. The understanding of the European Union was that the statement did not alter in any way the independence of the High Commissioner or her accountability to the United Nations Secretary-General, in line with established United Nations rules and procedures.

8. **Mr. Selim** (Egypt) said that during the five years since its establishment, the role of the Human Rights Council in dealing with questions relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms had evolved favourably. It was based on dialogue, cooperation, mutual understanding and avoidance of confrontation and selectivity. The universal periodic review, complaint mechanisms, the Forum on Minority Issues

and the system of special rapporteurs working within frameworks defined by clear mandates granted by the Council in keeping with its code of conduct had all strengthened its role in consolidating the foundations adopted in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, in particular the principle that the protection of human rights was basically the responsibility of national Governments and that the strengthening of those rights implied respect for the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and for their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

9. The promotion and protection of all human rights required a commitment to apply the universal periodic review to all States without discrimination within an interactive framework including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and all segments of civil society. It required all States to cooperate with special rapporteurs in accordance with their respective mandates, including invitations for field visits and prompt response to complaints and inquiries; respect by mandate holders for the limits of their mandates, the code of conduct and assignments given them by the Council; objectivity and accuracy in reporting; avoidance of selectivity or attempts to impose narrow criteria; and transparent dialogue between mandate holders and the Governments of the States concerned. Early warning mechanisms must be adopted for non-politicized, documented information concerning cases of grave human rights violations and States must cooperate with fact-finding missions established by the Council, especially in the case of peoples under occupation or suffering from conflicts. Politically motivated accusations made, on the basis of double standards or without a full investigation of the facts should be avoided as well.

10. In June 2010 Egypt had completed the universal periodic review process. Being fully supportive of the cooperative approach in dealing with human rights issues and serious about confronting the challenges it faced in that regard, it was currently developing the necessary institutional framework to implement the recommendations that had emerged from the review, a framework based on cooperation and integration between the efforts of the Government and civil society in coordination with the Egyptian National Council on Human Rights. It was engaged in intensive efforts to promote the activity of the Human Rights Council and ensure integration among all existing human rights mechanisms, both national and international, with a view to establishing all universally accepted human rights principles on an equal footing. In its role as current chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, Egypt would strive to ensure the continuation of that approach in the development of the Council's working methods in the context of their ongoing review in Geneva and in New York.

11. The international community's human rights endeavours were sabotaged by the constant efforts of some to impose themselves as custodians of human rights for the world, based on the untenable conviction that their values and systems were superior though they failed to address violations at home, as well as efforts to undermine balance among the principal United Nations organs and respect for the oversight of the General Assembly over the Human Rights Council, special procedures and treaty bodies.

12. The current discussion of the Report of the Human Rights Council would help pave the way to consensus on objective, comprehensive treatment of all human rights issues within a constructive framework based on equality among all aspects of those rights, whether civil, political, economic, social or cultural. He looked forward to enhanced international cooperation in meeting the aspiration of the peoples of the world to realize the right to development and to combat all forms of discrimination in accordance with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and without imposing any conditionalities or disputed concepts that were not supported by international law or failed to take into account social, cultural, religious and religious differences.

13. **Ms. Zhang** (China) said that, four years after its creation, the Human Rights Council's work in various areas was on track. Although there were still shortcomings and problems, its overall performance had been good, which had contributed to the promotion of human rights worldwide. Thus, the review should assess the Council's achievements and shortcomings over the years and make targeted improvements in accordance with the institution-building package and the principles set forth in the General Assembly resolution. The consultation process must be open, transparent and inclusive, with a positive approach by all parties to the dialogue with a view to reaching consensus. The Council and the Third Committee should further define their division of labour in order to avoid duplication.

14. China had been working relentlessly to promote human rights at the national level and had conscientiously fulfilled its duty as a member of the Human Rights Council. Its aim was to have a Council which addressed human rights on the basis of objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity, which facilitated international dialogue and cooperation on human rights and which worked to advance the cause of human rights.

15. **Mr. Ali** (Sudan) said that the Human Rights Council had proven to be a step in the right direction and an important element in building the Organization's human rights machinery. His delegation stressed the importance of review, but understood that the debate under way in Geneva related to a review of the Council's work and functioning, not changes in its rules or institutional structure. It was important to maintain what had been previously agreed and not open the door to disagreements by reviewing the rules and structures on which the Council had been founded and which had proven their effectiveness in protecting human rights.

16. The Sudan was currently preparing to submit its report in the context of the universal periodic review. Its competent agencies were striving to meet that obligation through monitoring and assessing human rights developments, especially in the wake of the passage of the 2005 interim Constitution, which was based on values relating to the protection and promotion of human rights, especially in the sphere of democratic transformation, political pluralism and citizenship. The United Nations independent expert on the situation of human rights in the Sudan had referred to many aspects of those developments, the most important of which had been the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections in a democratic and peaceful climate marked by transparency. The concern of the political leadership in the Sudan with the periodic review report was reflected in presidential directives that entrusted the preparation of the report to a national committee comprised of representatives of the Government and civil society.

17. That effort was being made despite the multiplicity of international and regional mechanisms concerned and their direct presence in the Sudan. It included the organization of direct meetings between human rights experts and United Nations missions in the Sudan especially in Darfur, for the orderly review of all the relevant developments. The Sudan had shown full cooperation with the independent expert appointed by the Council.

18. All those facts confirmed the Sudan's belief in the need to continue the role of the Council, while avoiding politicization and selectivity and relying on dialogue and cooperation. It was important to focus on technical assistance and capacity-building in the work of country mandates and not to resort to accusations that affected relations between the country concerned and the mandate holder.

19. His delegation valued the Council's efforts to promote the human rights of the Palestinian people and its adoption of the Goldstone report. It stressed the importance of punishing the perpetrators of the crimes committed against children, women and the elderly in Gaza, which had become an enormous prison.

20. **Mr. Kafando** (Burkina Faso) said that, as a member of the Human Rights Council, Burkina Faso had defined an institutional framework including the Government and civil society organizations to prepare relevant reports and follow up their recommendations. The second national citizenship week, held annually to mark the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, had been devoted to a reflection on mechanisms to assess the promotion of human rights. The participants had received training on the universal periodic review, the African Peer Review Mechanism and the role of the African Union.

21. The large number of reports to be drawn up in a limited time represented an extra burden for developing countries, and his delegation once again appealed for technical and financial support from the United Nations and from other States. He also called on the treaty bodies to rationalize and harmonize the complex human rights assessment methods, in order to lighten the task of developing countries and increase the effectiveness of those mechanisms.

22. **Mr. Apakan** (Turkey) said that the report of the Human Rights Council contained two important resolutions; in particular, resolution 15/1 on follow-up to the report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the May 2010 incident when Israeli forces attacked the humanitarian aid convoy to Gaza in international waters.

23. Based on testimonies and other information gathered, the report considered that the attack constituted a grave violation of human rights law and

international law. It also enumerated a series of violations of Israel's obligations under international human rights law and reaffirmed the illegality of the blockade on Gaza. In the view of Turkey, the report gave a fair account of the events based on solid facts and legal documents, and the vast majority of the international community endorsed its findings and conclusions.

24. Turkey called on Israel to acknowledge its mistakes and to act accordingly. It expected a formal apology and compensation for the wounded and for the families of the deceased. It had not submitted a separate resolution on the issue to the General Assembly. However, it could review its position, in consultation with other relevant groups and countries, depending on the Israeli attitude in the coming weeks.

25. The Turkish Commission of Investigation had also carried out an objective study and examined the legal implications of the attack. The resulting interim report had been presented to the panel of inquiry established by the Secretary-General.

26. Turkey also welcomed resolution 15/6 on follow-up to the report of the United Nations Committee of independent experts in international humanitarian and human rights law established pursuant to Council resolution 13/9 concerning the fact-finding mission on the Gaza conflict (the Goldstone report) and would follow up on the implementation of its recommendations.

27. Fighting impunity and establishing accountability had always been one of the objectives of the United Nations. The resolutions mentioned clearly addressed that objective. As long as justice has not been done, peace would always remain elusive.

28. **Ms. Sahussarungsi** (Thailand) said that the upcoming review of the Human Rights Council should take into consideration the need for it to continue to address human rights challenges in an even-handed manner. The Council must explore ways to engage constructively with countries of concern so that they recognized that it was in their own interest to improve their human rights situation. Consequently, it should continue working to reduce the politicization of human rights issues.

29. The universal periodic review mechanism, especially in its second cycle, should focus on effective facilitation and implementation of recommendations. Thailand viewed the universal periodic review as a landmark innovation in the United Nations human rights system. Many countries that had undergone the process had amended legislation or practices and adopted new policies, programmes and measures aimed at improving their human rights situation. Those successes must be consolidated by ensuring effective implementation and follow-up.

30. It was essential to continue improving the relationship between the Council and the special procedures by enhancing mutual cooperation and building trust and confidence. Moreover, the Council's work should be streamlined, reducing the proliferation of resolutions; rather, efforts should focus on the implementation of resolutions for real impact on the ground.

31. In December, Thailand would be hosting a retreat on the Human Rights Council review process to promote candid discussions, not only for the 47 Council members but for all the United Nations Member States, while raising the Council's profile in the Asia-Pacific region. Thailand looked forward to working closely with the Council to further the cause of human rights.

32. **Ms. Belskaya** (Belarus) said that Belarus took a positive view of the work performed by the Human Rights Council and welcomed the aspiration by Member States for dialogue and constructive engagement within that body. Recalling the Council's effective conduct of special sessions on such issues as the Haiti earthquake and the occupied Palestinian territory, she conveyed her delegation's approval of the wide coverage of the Council's activities over the period under review, which bore witness to its pursuit of a balanced approach to the myriad human rights questions on its agenda. Belarus also welcomed the increased attention being paid by the Council to the issue of human trafficking and supported the idea of setting up a special anti-trafficking unit within OHCHR. Turning to the issue of special procedures, she noted with approval the growing importance attached to those procedures in the Council's work and welcomed their strengthening but also stressed the need for strict observance of the Code of Conduct by the special procedures mandate holders.

33. She conveyed her country's satisfaction with the work achieved under the universal periodic review process and its conviction that, when implemented by

Member States, the ensuing recommendations would substantially improve the situation of human rights in the countries concerned. At the same time, Belarus stressed that the review was a voluntary collaborative arrangement between States and reiterated its categorical opposition to its use as a means of exerting pressure on States, including through the adoption of unacceptable and politicized recommendations. In that context, Belarus supported the view of the Non-Aligned Movement that the review in New York of the status of the Human Rights Council should only take place after the process of reviewing its activities and operation had been concluded in Geneva. Belarus was also of the view that neither review should result in radical changes to the operation of the Council and it would only support recommendations which would not overburden the Council or undermine the cooperative atmosphere that prevailed within it.

34. **Mr. Berti** (Cuba) said that the working methods and agenda of the Human Rights Council revealed its respect for sound democratic principles. However, significant challenges and threats remained to the climate of genuine dialogue and cooperation in its work. Cuba was concerned that it had not been possible to end all the country mandates established on a discriminatory and selective basis and reaffirmed the importance that the Council's special procedures should respect the principles of objectivity and impartiality, as well as the Code of Conduct.

35. Nevertheless, on the whole, the Council's work to date should be assessed positively. It had established effective practices for a comprehensive analysis of the human rights situation in the world, and the climate of respect and trust that was essential for its work. It had also revealed its capacity to tackle emergency situations, such as the serious violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people perpetrated by Israel.

36. The Human Rights Council review process would begin shortly and Cuba stressed the need to ensure a technical, transparent and inclusive intergovernmental process, first in Geneva and then in New York. No radical changes in the way the Council functioned were needed. The main purpose of the review should be to enhance the elements of cooperation and dialogue in its work and to eliminate the selective practices and political motivation that still lay beneath the treatment of human rights situations. In its view, the universal periodic review was the appropriate mechanism for considering the human rights situation in all countries on an equal basis.

37. Cuba reiterated its willingness to cooperate with the Human Rights Council and the human rights machinery of the United Nations, applied universally and without discrimination, as well as to dialogue with all States on a basis of mutual respect, recognition of sovereign equality, and acknowledgement of the right of every people to choose its own political system and institutions.

38. **Ms. Alsaleh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that her delegation affirmed its determination to cooperate constructively with the Council to ensure that all human rights were addressed fairly and with the same degree of attention accorded to each. Forty-three years after its monstrous occupation of the Syrian Golan, Israel still refused to comply with United Nations resolutions, including those of the Human Rights Council. As the occupying Power, Israel also obstructed the work of the Council and of fact-finding missions seeking to provide recommendations on protection of Palestinian civilians from its attacks; perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity continued to boast openly of their crimes committed with impunity. United Nations bodies should therefore take additional measures to investigate and prosecute Israelis responsible for committing crimes which had been documented and corroborated in the Report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict. The objectivity of the report of the Human Rights Council's fact-finding mission on the Israeli attack on the freedom flotilla headed for Gaza on a humanitarian mission must also be commended.

39. Her delegation rejected all proposals calling for changes in the agenda of the Council or for restricting victims' opportunities to disclose human rights abuses that some States sought to cover up. The Council needed to implement its resolutions urgently, particularly those relating to the human rights situation in Palestine and the occupied Arab territories, as the only platform that gave voice to the victims of human rights abuse without double standards or politicization in a unique and long-standing situation in which racial discrimination and human rights abuse had been legitimized.

40. **Mr. Loulichki** (Morocco) said that since its establishment, the Human Rights Council had provided a space for dialogue, action and initiatives to promote

and protect human rights. He underscored the important role Morocco had played in establishing its working methods, particularly the universal periodic review.

41. In line with General Assembly resolution 60/251, the five-year review of the work, mission and mandate of the Human Rights Council would soon take place. The first session of the Intergovernmental Working Group for the review in Geneva had focused on calculating the efficiency of the activities of the Council and its ability to meet chronic human rights needs on the ground, and had reflected the converging points of view on the most practical aspects of the work of the Council.

42. That assessment and the conclusions drawn would serve to reinforce the capacities of the Human Rights Council to promote and protect human rights, particularly in urgent situations, and improve human rights on the ground. However, it should be remembered that the review process was not a reform of the Council. He called for fruitful technical cooperation with developing countries and for more funding to be made available so that NGOs, particularly from countries of the South, could be involved in the universal periodic review of their respective countries.

43. Lastly, he commended the work of OHCHR and the indispensable support it provided to the Human Rights Council.

44. **Ms. Rasheed** (Observer for Palestine) said that the initial findings of the Goldstone report had clearly confirmed that Israel had committed serious human rights violations and grave breaches of international humanitarian law against the Palestinian people. In view of those violations and the ongoing Israeli blockade of Gaza, which had brought further hardship to the population, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 64/254, calling on Israel and the Palestinian side to conduct independent and credible investigations based on international standards into the findings of that Goldstone report. A committee of independent experts had been convened by the Human Rights Council to assess any domestic legal or other proceedings by both parties. That Committee had confirmed that while the Palestinian Authority had established an independent investigation commission, which had carried out a careful and detailed inquiry, Israel had not. The Committee had concluded in its report (A/HRC/15/50) that Israel's lack of cooperation had hampered its assessment of Israel's response to the call to conduct independent and credible investigations into those serious violations. Palestine called on the international community to compel Israel to carry out the investigations in conformity with international standards.

45. With regard to the report prepared by the international fact-finding mission to investigate violations of international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, resulting from the Israeli attacks on the flotilla of ships carrying humanitarian assistance (A/HRC/15/21), her delegation supported its conclusions and called for serious follow-up by the international community, including the Security Council, to hold the perpetrators to account and to ensure that justice was done. She expressed her deepest condolences to the Government of Turkey for the loss of Turkish civilians on that humanitarian mission.

46. Both reports confirmed the trend that Israel flouted international law and treated the international community with disdain, without any consequences. She called on all Member States to fight that impunity and to adhere to the founding principles of the United Nations.

47. **Mr. Heaton** (Canada) said that his delegation welcomed the decisions taken at the fifteenth session of the Human Rights Council to establish two new special procedures mandates, namely the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly and a working group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice. He also noted with satisfaction the examples of cross-regional collaboration at the recent session of the Council and hoped it would continue. He expressed his concern at attempts to limit the independence of OHCHR, impeding the Office in its work to advocate all human rights in all parts of the world.

48. The upcoming five-year review of the Human Rights Council should strengthen the role of the Council, particularly in response to enduring and urgent human rights situations, in preventing new violations and in mainstreaming human rights throughout the United Nations system. To achieve that aim, the annual programme of work of the Council should be more streamlined and responsive, and its agenda should be efficient and balanced.

49. His delegation remained committed to strengthening the special procedures and the universal periodic review, and during the review process Canada would work with others to encourage greater engagement of States with the special procedures and to defend the independence of mandate holders. He hoped that the universal periodic review procedure would be extended and would promote the participation of civil society and NGOs in the working group prior to the universal periodic review. He also called for a second cycle to be added to the process to follow up on recommendations and to take into account new developments.

50. *Ms. Ploder (Austria), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

51. **Ms. Furman** (Israel) said that her delegation was dismayed and disappointed at the report of the Human Rights Council and the resolutions therein. The political nature of the Council had been demonstrated again by the resolution adopted just two days after the incident of 31 May involving vessels bound for the Gaza Strip, despite a lack of information about what had occurred. The report on the matter displayed the same wilful ignorance, bias and disregard for impartiality, truth or promoting human rights. Israel was continuing to investigate the events concerning the flotilla and would share its findings with the Secretary-General's panel of inquiry.

52. Half of the country-specific resolutions contained in the report of the Human Rights Council concerned Israel, further demonstrating its bias and lack of impartiality. By singling out Israel in that way the Human Rights Council had clearly violated General Assembly resolution 60/251 and basic notions of fairness and impartiality, undermining its credibility and legitimacy.

53. Israel was a democracy committed to the rule of law and human rights, with an internationally respected, independent judiciary and a pluralist and active civil society. It had engaged candidly and professionally in dialogue with various United Nations mechanisms, including the universal periodic review. However, it could not accept a partisan report that perpetuated a politicized agenda.

54. **Mr. Kimura** (Japan) said that his country had participated actively in the work of the Human Rights Council in the four years since its establishment. Recognizing nevertheless that certain issues needed to be addressed in order to improve the situation of human rights around the world, Japan welcomed the outcome of the first intergovernmental working group session on the review of the Council.

55. In discussions concerning the review, it would be necessary to consider coordination between the Council and other United Nations bodies dealing with human rights, such as the Third Committee, in order to make system-wide efforts mutually reinforcing. In addition, it would be important to determine whether the universal periodic review mechanism and other newly created functions of the Council were contributing effectively to improving human rights situations and follow-up on their outcomes. His Government reiterated its position that the report of the Council should be presented directly to the General Assembly instead of the Third Committee.

56. Although leprosy was curable, misunderstanding and ignorance of the disease continue to provide the basis for prejudice and discrimination. To correct that situation, Japan had contributed to the drafting of principles and guidelines by the Council on eliminating discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their families. It had also presented a draft resolution on the subject that the Council had adopted by consensus.

57. **Mr. Rastam** (Malaysia) said that the establishment of the Human Rights Council had marked a key paradigm shift, as it had represented a rejection of adversarial approaches to human rights work marred by politicization and naming and shaming, seeking instead to foster dialogue, cooperation and mutual respect in the new institution. Ahead of the forthcoming mandated review of the Council, his country held the view that Member States should reinforce its strengths — in particular, the successful implementation of the universal periodic review mechanism — instead of reconstructing or reframing existing arrangements. Moreover, some thought should be given to streamlining the Council's work, improving its working methods and increasing its visibility as it matured into its intended role. With regard to working methods, his delegation disagreed with charges that the Council lacked the capacity to respond to human rights situations and held that its responsiveness had been clearly demonstrated through the convening of numerous special sessions and urgent debate on pressing issues.

58. His delegation looked forward to the completion of the ongoing work of the intergovernmental working group on the review of the Council's work. In closing, he wished to acknowledge the contribution of non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions, both of which had an increased space to participate in the Council's work to promote and protect human rights. In order to ensure that the contribution of such entities was effective, the United Nations resolutions governing their participation should apply.

59. **Ms. Yu** (Republic of Korea) said that her delegation welcomed the two new special procedures established by the Council. However, the Human Rights Council needed further improvement in certain areas: for instance, it should avoid the proliferation of resolutions and provide strengthened cooperation to special procedures. The Geneva review process must be complemented by a status review in New York. She recalled that the original purpose of the review process had been to strengthen the international commitment to human rights; there was a need to avoid duplication by the Third Committee and the Council.

60. **Mr. Sammis** (United States of America) said that the Report of the Human Rights Council reflected both the Council's strengths and its weaknesses. The United States was proud of many of the Council's resolutions on subjects including the freedom of assembly, discrimination against women, freedom of opinion, violence against Afghan schoolchildren, trafficking in persons, the protection of human rights defenders and human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS. It was especially proud of the Council's recent renewal of the mandate of the independent expert for the Sudan and of new resolutions on Kyrgyzstan and Guinea.

61. However, it remained disappointed with the Council's unbalanced and one-sided approach to the situation in Israel and the Palestinian territories. That was especially evident in its handling of the mandate and report of Justice Richard Goldstone. Its continuing bias was further evident in its hasty resolution establishing a fact-finding mission with a flawed mandate to investigate the tragic incident aboard Gaza-bound ships in May 2010 and its resolution following up on the mission's report.

62. **Mr. Ulibarri** (Costa Rica) welcomed the Human Rights Council's creation of a mandate for a Special Rapporteur on the right to peaceful freedom of assembly and association and its establishment of a Working Group on discrimination against women.

63. Costa Rica placed equal value on civil, cultural, economic, social and political rights. While not a member of the Council, it had made efforts to cooperate with its work and had sponsored human rights initiatives in such areas as terrorism, indigenous peoples, adequate housing, health, discrimination against women, extreme poverty, contemporary forms of slavery and arbitrary detention. It had presented on behalf of the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training, a draft resolution on training teachers, public employees, security forces and military personnel. It had also supported, along with the Maldives and Switzerland, an initiative on human rights and the environment.

64. The review was an opportunity to make the Council more proactive in the promotion of human rights, in order to improve its response capacity in chronic and emerging situations. The tools and mechanisms available to the Council should also be assessed for their effectiveness. Costa Rica attached great importance to the use of flexible tools for country-specific situations.

65. **Mr. Phuangketkeow** (President of the Human Rights Council) said that during the challenging period of the five-year review it was important that the Council was not distracted from its real work of promoting and protecting human rights.

66. The success of the review, which was not a reform of the Council, would depend on close cooperation between the United Nations offices in Geneva and New York. The review being carried out in Geneva would focus on the work of the Council and how to enhance its work and functioning within its mandate. He and the Council members were open to all proposals as to how that could be achieved. During the review, many issues would be considered but it would be guided by four overarching objectives: that the Council should have greater impact on human rights on the ground; that coherence between all Human Rights Council procedures should be ensured; that the capacity of the Council to deal constructively and even-handedly with urgent human rights situations should be enhanced; and that the Council's work should be streamlined as much as possible to maximize time and resources.

67. The review being carried out by the General Assembly in New York would focus primarily on the status of the Council, and was therefore distinct from the work being done in Geneva. However, it was important to enhance synergies between the two procedures and to work closely, particularly in areas where the two reviews overlapped. He looked forward to working closely with the General Assembly and the Third Committee during the review process.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.